NEWSLETTER

ARBORETA & BOTANIC GARDENS

prepared by the public services division

March 10, 1973

RESEARCH DIVISION

For several years the Research Division has offered a helping hand to outstanding students of biology classes at Pasadena High School. Their teacher, Jim Hastings, has contacted us each spring about student science projects working under staff members of the Research Division. Last year we started a weed ecology study on a vacant lot. Each spring, a student interested in this project would identify the different species of weeds and their distribution. This year Sue Crowhurst is covering the project under the direction of Lee Enari. Two other students, Olaf Buchel and Martha Steele, expressed their interest in oak root rot fungus. They are working under the guidance of James Doty and are currently studying our collection of armillaria cultures. There are many strains of Armillaria mellea in the field, which may explain the unlimited host range of this fungus. The students will be looking for and describing variation in growth rate and form in culture.

ARBORETUM DIVISION

Work on the deck adjacent to the Bromeliad Greenhouse should be completed by the time you receive this letter. The deck will serve as a lead from the Demonstration Home Gardens north to the volunteer garden, the adult vegetable garden and, the greenhouses. It was constructed in accord with the aim of dispersing the public to as many points of interest as possible.

All the roads and parking lots at the Arboretum have been sealed and restriping of the parking areas completed.

Additional plantings are being made along Baldwin Avenue between the curb and parking area to bring this area up to the standards of north Baldwin plantings.

Work has begun on the new Information Center and completion is expected within 90 days.

Rain has slowed up much of the construction work on the grounds, but in spite of this the pumps are now in operation in Meadow Brook and additional electrical work is underway in that area.

DESCANSO DIVISION

A very successful camellia show was held last weekend attracting 11,783 visitors. We expect a good attendance this weekend, too, when the Southern California Daffodil Show is held in the Gardens.

We've had over 25 inches of rain so far this year with mostly beneficial results. Descanso lilacs should be better than ever because of the heavy rains and should be in full bloom the end of this month and the first two weeks of April. The iris also look especially promising and should hit their peak next month. Gardener Bill Outwin has just returned from a vacation at Disneyland in Florida. He says he still likes Descanso best.

On March 2nd the Camellia Council gave its annual steak dinner for the staff. About 25 people enjoyed this generous event.

The Great Blue Heron currently in residence is still stealing fish from our lake. It is a great sight to watch.

EDUCATION DIVISION

From Palos Verdes to Pasadena, from Pomona to Santa Monica, schools have planted trees given them by your Department. A total of 551 liquidambars went out to the schools of the County. An additional 273 were given for park and campsite planting to the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Campfire Girls of the San Gabriel Valley.

The Las Voluntarias Arbor Day Committee prepared new and excellent resource packets that accompanied every Arbor Day tree. Many people gave many hours of assistance to the Education Division on this project.

According to Tak Niiya, the Youth Education Section has 210 children registered in 14 different workshops at this time. Karen, Ron and Leo are regularly assisted by high school students who are receiving valuable experience in both horticulture and teaching.

The Adult Education spring semester shows a total of 592 registered students in the 16 courses and workshops currently in session. Fred Lang, the Department's landscape architect has just opened a new course at the Arboretum, - a lecture and field trip combination called Treasures in Nature. Another new workshop, Vegetable Gardening, has planting well under way despite rain that seems to come every Thursday according to instructor Diane Martin. More than half the courses had 60 or more applicants which just confirms that plants are the in thing!

SOUTH COAST DIVISION

Our thanks to Don Woolley for spending part of an afternoon here showing us a few of his slides illustrating the development of South Coast. The pictures were both instructive and amusing -- the garden and the staff have changed a great deal.

We regret the loss of one of our most attractive trees. The small but spectacular Eucalyptus erythrocorys (Red-Cap Gum) along the tram road was uprooted by the wind following one of those soaking February rains.

During the past ten years, Audubon Society observers have recorded sighting 184 species of birds at South Coast. This compares quite favorably with a recorded 178 species in thirty years observation at the Arboretum. (Editor's note: In Southern California, more species of birds are found along the coast than inland.)

Congratulations to Ed Carrithers and his bride. Hope you live "Happily ever after!"

PUBLIC SERVICES DIVISION

South Coast -- Henry Noerdlinger has completed his move into his new house and returned to work on Wednesday.
Arboretum -- Tour guides are awaiting the installation of a new PA system for the Mini-bus. The old amplifier and speakers have become so weak that visitors complain that they cannot hear the narration.

Everyone is concerned about the weather--the PSD because it affects tram tours, school field trips and attendance. Dan Martel passes on the information that we have had 21.63 inches of rain this weather season which started last October 1st and it has rained every month since last August, thereby providing the best distribution of rain we've had in a long time.